

Life is Love.

What, what is life, the life we live,
As in earth's round we move?
'Tis measured by the gifts we give,
Affection's death to prove,
The soul-broken tokens we receive,
For life, for life is love.

While each dear friend, since childhood's time,
To cheer us lingereth,
We would not willingly resign
The precious flame of breath;
Pray fate delay the final sign,
And shun the kiss of death.

The sordid wretch, whose hopes and fears
Are shared by him alone,
Though his wealth and pomp of years,
And his a kingly throne,
How miserable his lot appears
If he be thus alone.

Though humble be the roof above,
If each soul serves its plan,
Life like a peaceful stream may move
Which at heaven's fount began;
They truly live, who truly love
Their God and fellow-man.

Ere shadowy angels stand beside
With summons to depart,
Full many a knot shall be untied
That binds us heart to heart;
Our thoughts shall wander o'er the tide
That keeps fond souls apart.

And when they all have passed away,
When earth's last bond is riven,
We would not lengthen by a day,
The measure God has given;
Ere we shall taste, to last for aye,
The life, the love of heaven.

—SELECTED.

"Souls not Immortal."

BY J. P. MARTIN.

In No. 13, current volume of the EVANGELIST, is a short essay under the above caption, which shall engross our attention. In the main the writer has not the true insight of the subject, but one feature of his article is correct—that souls are not immortal—but to arrive at this conclusion we do not cover the same grounds.

The first thought that fastens upon our mind is that of *soul*. Where and to whom shall we go for an exegesis of the subject? Shall we go to the historic closets of the past, and from their deep recesses of obscurity bring forth some ancient volume, and from its dusty pages elucidate the much desired information? No; we will go to the Bible for instructions, knowing that it speaks to us through inspiration in tones of divine authority which cannot be mistaken, while all else only mystifies and misleads. It may be possible that in confining our limits to the Bible we are resorting to a "work," that, to many, is even more obscure and bewildering than that already hinted at. If this be true the fault is your own; you all have Bibles; as a book it is found in almost every home of civilization, but too often is it found in an unused place, or as an ornament upon our table with no visible marks of use. Wherever I find a well-thumbed Bible I am most sure to find one or two saints. Though the Bible may lay within eye range during a lifetime and yet its pages be, to us, an unknown record, but we have digressed.

The first account we have of soul relates to its origin, and teaches us that it is a combination, the result of which is being—that which identifies us from other orders of God's animal creation, as well as from other intelligencies.

In the beginning of Genesis, we read that "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Here is the desired information in a nut-shell. Of the dust of the ground was man formed, and into his nostrils was life breathed; the result was, man became a living soul; withdraw the breath of life, and the logical conclusion is forced upon us that he would be a dead soul. Can we deny this presentation of the fact?

If we search the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, we cannot find a single text taken in connection with the tenor of its contexts that either teaches or implies an existing difference between soul and being—being and individual are identical. The clay of which Adam was formed, being animated by the life principle (which is the same in all of God's animal creation, existing in different degrees) was constituted being—a combination of elements. Death breaks this combination and being is destroyed.

We will now endeavor to expand the idea contained in the above parenthetical clause; "All life is the same. It all issues from the same fountain. God is that fountain." Starting from this quota-

tion, the author of which, to us, is unknown, we will proceed with the subject. "God is that fountain." We will reverse the order in which they stand, and begin with the last. In Him is life unlimited, exhaustless and eternal. He is immortal. Immortality signifies death-proof, consequently, pain and disease-proof. From him life emanates to all creatures. The life given to Adam was to continue as long as he continued obedient to God's law; the properties of continuing this perfect life were contained in the fruit of Eden's trees, which was his food; but as soon as Adam disobeyed the law, he incurred the penalty, and was no more permitted to partake of the perfect life-food, but was driven out into the world whose very elements were cursed for his sake, thus creating channels through which death could the more easily reach and overcome him. Adam, being a perfect man, could the better withstand disease, consequently, death was a long time conquering him; his posterity, however, coming into existence under a restricted supply of life principle and a sin-cursed body—composition—earth—were not so well fortified against disease and death, and as a result, through succeeding generations and accumulated ills and multiplied degeneracies, the human race succumbs in a much shorter time than did he. We will notice the balance of the quotation.

"All life is the same." To illustrate, we will say that the sun which is the source of all light, shines with equal force upon all objects directly under the influence of his rays, but the result is not the same; not because of the sun, but of the object upon which it shines. The same sunlight shining upon a diamond, a brick, and various other objects, does not produce the same effect. The light is the same, but the objects upon which it shines, differ in their capacity to receive and transmit it. So, too, with life. It all flows from the one inexhaustible fountain, and is the same, but its recipients are not the same. Paul tells us that there are different kinds of flesh, but says nothing about different kinds of life. He was too great a reasoner to commit so great an error. The oyster has life, but its organism is such that it can make use of but little, just as the brick can receive and transmit but little light of the sun. So with each of the higher grades of life in beast, fish, and fowl. Like the various objects operated upon by the sun's rays, so these various creatures show forth differently the various qualities and powers they possess, when life enters and animates the bodily capacities. And as the diamond is perfect in its nature, and so adapted that it can receive and reflect so fully as to seem as though it possessed within itself the source of light, and were itself a miniature sun. So with mankind; the masterpiece of God's earthly creation, made only "a little lower than the angels." This perfect creature (Adam) was made so complete in his organism (before sin marred it) as to be able to receive and retain life to that degree as to seem the author of it. Adam was formed grandly and perfectly, and adapted to receive life in perfection. He was more grand than any other creature, because of his grander organism, mental and physical. Yet, let us remember that, as the diamond could reflect no light except when shone upon by the sun, so Adam could possess and enjoy the light given him only so long as he was supplied from the fountain—God. Man is no more a fount of life, than a diamond is a fount of light; the proof of this is, that since he transgressed, he dies, just as God said he would, notwithstanding Satan's protest to the contrary. In contemplation of these facts we are constrained to add that Adam was made a soul, and a living soul at that, and yet he did not possess a single element of immortality, hence, not an immortal soul.

It is true we hinted somewhere that Adam possessed the possibility of eternal life conditioned on obedience; but had he continued obedient to God's law he could have had only eternal life; he would have continued to receive it from God on the conditions of the law—obedience. This would be eternal life on the basis of eternal obedience; but it would not be death proof, because a violation of this law at any time would incur the penalty—death, destruction of being. To be death-proof is

to be placed beyond the limits of death's power. Adam was not so situated, neither are angels; the same obedience is required of all intelligencies as an exemption from death; when we say all intelligencies, it is understood that those to whom the gift of immortality is given are excepted—they being like God, it is impossible for them to be otherwise than perfect in the fullest degree. No one but God and they to whom it is given are in possession of this condition—immortality. While in Adam's case, as well as all others, with perhaps a few exceptions, down to the advent of the Gospel age; this condition of immortality was not attainable: since then, however, it is attainable to all who with patient endurance seek for it. It is the prize of great value; the hidden treasure, which a man, when he found it, goes and sells all else and purchases it; it is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; it is joint heirship with Jesus; it is to be kings and priests, and to reign with Christ, the Lord. Eternal life as possessed by Adam, and which by him was lost through transgression—perfect human life—will eventually be restored to the entire human race, since this restoration is purchased by the blood of Christ; in other words the forfeit of perfect human life by Adam, is restored or ransomed by the perfect human life of Jesus which he gave for the sin of the world.

Immortality, however, can only be obtained as Jesus obtained it, by sacrificing the human. Jesus forever laid down his perfect human life as the price of our redemption, demanded by justice, and thereby justifies us before God—his righteousness being imputed unto us—because of which God is pleased to call us sons, and as such asks us to give him our hearts, or otherwise stated, invites us to sacrifice the human existence, and to suffer with Jesus in order that we may be exalted with him.

Almost all the New Testament scriptures, and especially the epistolary writings are addressed to that class that have sacrificed the perfect human life—every fair prospect that earth can hold out as an inducement to anchor our affections to this world—and have been consecrated to the spiritual life, by being baptized into Christ, to walk in newness of life. "By grace are ye saved" applies to the entire race. It is by the grace of God in providing the remedy that we are saved from the Adamic death, and restored to man's primitive condition; but to attain unto immortality, we must sacrifice the prospect of eventually entering this restored condition, and must suffer all things for Christ's sake, that we may sit with him as kings and priests; in short to become members of the Church of which Jesus is the head. To attain unto all this, requires works, a complete consecration to God.

In the resurrection, all men will come forth unto the judgement, which is to last a thousand years, and during which time those who, in this age, overcame evil, will reign with Christ as kings and priests; their labors, no doubt, will be to instruct as priests, and mete out justice as kings; to instruct and rule the emancipated race; to judge men and angels. It is during this age that some will receive many, and some few stripes. This is the time spoken of by Peter, when he speaks of the restitution of all things. During this age Satan will be bound, his power curtailed, and evil in an active state will be removed. Then there will be no reasonable excuse for men, with Satan bound and his influence removed, and the experience had with sin, we would conclude that he would forever forsake evil and cling to good; but at the end of this age, when Satan is loosed for a season, many will forsake good and hearken unto him as Adam did in the beginning. These become his angels, and with him are cast into the lake of fire which is the second death from which there is no emancipation.

The law by which this judgement age is governed, or that which the resurrected human race is expected to keep is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." Man will be expected to do unto others as he would that they should do unto him. Some will come forth into this age

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